

Food Product Order

*92. LT. GENERAL (RETD.) PRAKASH MANI
TRIPATHI :
SHRI N. RAMAKRISHNA REDDY :

Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether a New Food Product Order has been issued;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the extent to which the new order will provide requisite leverage to the food processing industries for improving efficiency and productivity;

(c) the extent to which this order will give a boost to the domestic industry in developing food processing industries in the country; and

(d) the reaction of food processing industries to this order?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI DILIP KUMAR RAY) : (a) to (d) The Government has recently notified the Fruit Products (Amendment) Order 1997. This notification (SO:1530) was published in the Gazette of India on June 14, 1997.

These amendments have been made with a view to meet adequately the long felt needs of the processed fruit industry of the country. These are expected to facilitate greater innovation in product formulations, promote food safety and consumer participation, encourage good manufacturing practices and reduce procedural delays and redundancy.

Fruit Products (Amendment) Order 1997 has made a number of procedural modifications to debureaucratise the process of licence renewal, label approval and admissibility of unspecified fruit products as well as aseptic and flexible packaging. In order to encourage innovative product mix, the said Order has enlarged the list of food additives significantly by the inclusion of low calorie sweeteners such as Aspartame and Aceflume K, which may now promote an entire range of diet fruit products.

Similarly, several food acids such as malic, citric, tartaric and lactic have been permitted in fruit products as acidulants and their quantity will be determined as per good manufacturing practices.

These amendments also provide for an omnibus variety of pickles without media. They accord the syrups and sharbats made out of dry fruits (containing a minimum of 10% dry fruit) the status of fruit syrups. Besides, they also ensure protection of consumers' interest by enlarging the composition of the Central Fruit Products Advisory Committee to include the representative of consumer organisations.

Since, these amendments have all the ingredients for improvement of efficiency and productivity in processed fruit sector, it is expected that the domestic industry will receive considerable boost on this account. These amendments are structured to liberalise the existing procedures, to cut down delays and repetitions, to enhance innovation and good manufacturing practices and balance them with food safety and consumers' interest. All these are expected to have a positive and pro-active impact on the fruit processing industries.

The reaction of the fruit processing industry to these developments has been extremely encouraging. The industry has been persistent in their demand to revoke the antiquated food laws, and obtain new legislative instruments which can foster innovation and quality, and freedom of enterprise consistent with good manufacturing practices.

Since the recent FPO amendments constitute a significant step in the direction, food processing industries have conveyed their gratitude to the Government in no uncertain words.

Identity Cards

*93. SHRI CHANDRABHUSHAN SINGH :
SHRI PRAKASH VISHWANATH PARANJPE :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the newsitem captioned "Home Ministry keen on National Identity Cards" appearing in the 'Times of India' dated June 29, 1997;

(b) if so, whether the Government plan to introduce identity cards system to check illegal infiltration;

(c) if so, the details of the scheme;

(d) the amount likely to be spent on this project;

(e) the time by which it is likely to be completed;